

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of assisting in the diagnosis of cardiomyopathy, myocarditis, or both, that arises as a result of an infection in a patient, comprising, obtaining a sample of a body fluid from the patient, and determining a level of a brain natriuretic peptide (BNP) ~~or a fragment thereof, atrial natriuretic peptide (ANF) or a fragment thereof,~~ and atrial natriuretic peptide (ANF) and a fragment thereof and ANF or a fragment thereof, within the sample of body fluid and comparing the level of BNP, ~~ANF~~ or both BNP and ANF to the level of BNP, ~~ANF~~, or both BNP and ANF from a control group, where an increase in the level of BNP, ~~ANF~~, or both BNP and ANF in the sample, compared to the level of BNP, ~~ANF~~, or both BNP and ANF in the control group, is an indicator of a ~~symptom~~ of cardiomyopathy, myocarditis or both cardiomyopathy and myocarditis that arises as a result of an infection in a patient.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of determining the concentration of BNP, ~~ANF~~ or both BNP and ANF involves an assay comprising ~~one or more than~~ at least one antibody exhibiting affinity for the BNP, ~~ANF, or both.~~ or a fragment thereof, ~~one or more than one antibody exhibiting affinity for the ANF or a fragment thereof, or one or more than one antibody exhibiting affinity for both the BNP or a fragment thereof and the ANF or a fragment thereof.~~

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the body fluid comprises plasma.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the body fluid comprises urine.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the body fluid comprises cerebrospinal fluid.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the infection comprises a viral infection, a rickettsial infection, a bacterial infection, a mycobacterial infection, a spirochetal infection, a fungal infection, or a parasitic infection.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the parasitic infection comprises *Trypanosoma cruzi*.
8. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the at least one antibody comprises a polyclonal antibody, a monoclonal antibody, or a combination thereof.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the at least one antibody comprises a polyclonal antibody.
10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the at least one antibody comprises a monoclonal antibody.
- 11 (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein, ~~in~~ the step of obtaining a sample of a body fluid from the patient, patient comprises obtaining two or more than two samples of body fluid from the patient ~~are obtained over a period of time~~ at different points in time.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11 wherein, in the step of determining the level of BNP or the level of BNP and ANF, ~~or fragment thereof, ANF or a fragment thereof, or BNP and a fragment thereof and ANF or a fragment thereof,~~ the level of BNP or the level of BNP and ANF, ~~ANF or both BNP and ANF~~ is determined within each of the two or more ~~than~~ two samples of body fluid, and the level of BNP, ~~ANF~~ or both BNP and ANF compared to determine a change in the BNP, ~~ANF~~ or both BNP and ANF levels within the body fluid over time.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein a significant increase in the level of BNP, ~~ANF~~ or both BNP and ANF is a predictor of cardiomyopathy or myocarditis.

14-19. (Cancelled)

20. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the assay is selected from the group consisting of RIA, ELISA, fluoroimmunoassay, immunofluorometric assay, and immunoradiometric assay.

21. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the patient is a human or a non-human animal.

22. (Withdrawn – Currently amended) A method of monitoring the effectiveness of a therapy for treating cardiomyopathy, myocarditis, or an infection capable of causing cardiomyopathy or myocarditis in a patient, the method comprising;

i) obtaining two or more ~~than two~~ samples of a body fluid from the patient at different points in time over a period of time;

ii) determining the level of a brain natriuretic peptide (BNP) ~~or a fragment thereof,~~
~~atrial natriuretic peptide (ANF), or a fragment thereof,~~ or both BNP ~~or a fragment thereof~~ and
ANF ~~or a fragment thereof~~, within the two or more ~~than two~~ samples of body fluid;

wherein, a decrease in BNP, ANF ~~or both BNP and ANF~~ level in a sample taken at a later
time point as compared to the BNP or both BNP and ANF level in a sample taken at an earlier
time point indicates ~~in the sample over the period time is an indicator of success of the treatment.~~

23. (Cancelled)